



The Buckeye Airlifter



The 179th Airlift Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, Mansfield, OH

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Annual training on paradise island

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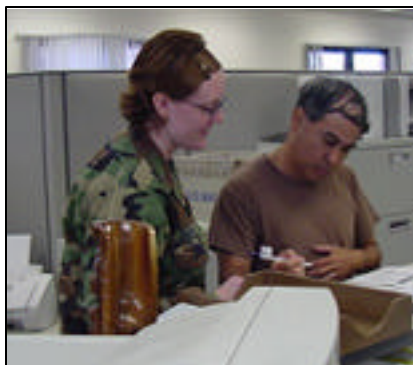
Annual training never looked so good. It seems lately that a lot of 179th members are deployed to locations with a lot of sand, but no beach. That wasn't the case for members of aerial port, finance and safety who deployed for two weeks to the beautiful Hawaiian island of Oahu.

While the temperatures averaged more than 80 degrees and the ocean view from Hickam Air Force Base offered tropical aqua blue waters and breaking surf, this deployment was not without a lot of work for the 42 people on annual training.

Members of the 179th Safety Office provided new sets of eyes for a unit preparing for various inspections. They helped the Hawaii Air National Guard by conducting safety inspections in support group, medical squadron, security forces and services. The Ohio team looked at hazards, safety training and documentation for the various sections.

"We are not learning a lot from the perspective of safety and flying C-130s," said Chief Tom Musille. "But because they have F-15s we can see some different things and we may be able to give them another perspective on how we do things."

While the safety office was busy all



Ohio and Hawaii finance personnel work together during annual training.



Chief Musille and MSgt. Simmering review Hawaii's MDS before an inspection.

over the base, the 179th Finance Office was assisting their Hawaiian counterparts in a different way. Seven members of the 179th Finance Office helped train new personnel, work with mobility lines and research everyday type finance transactions.

"We are so busy at home on drill weekends this is good one-on-one training for us," said Tech Sgt. Aimee Plenge.

While safety and finance worked more regular-type hours, the 179th Aerial Port Squadron had anything but normal working schedules. Members of aerial port hit the ground running by starting work on Memorial Day. More than 20 members of aerial port worked around the clock in fleet, passenger terminal, aircraft services and ATOC. Lts Doug Frank and Trevor Mason were able to participate in a junior officer orientation program offered through the active duty.

"The benefit of this program is that it lets you see all the areas versus the one you may have worked in," Frank said. "There are so many more things we can learn here because they do more."

The lieutenants were able to spend time in seven various sections of aerial port talking with supervisors and understanding the day-to-day challenges of an active duty aerial port squadron.

Capt. Myron Shirley, active duty transportation flight commander, seemed to sum up the deployment best for everyone. "When the Guard and Reserve come here it forces us to look at our training responsibilities. It gives us a new set of eyes and allows us the chance to see something we may not have seen. This type of training lets us use the total force concept—we go to war together therefore we should train together."

(see more AT photos on the 179th Web site.)

2002: The Year of Diversity